

# 'Understanding Gospel Is The Great Light Of Truth'

By J M. HESLOP

Church News Editor

FALLON, NEV.

**R**oyal Crook, patriarch of the newly organized Fallon Stake, has based his life on truth. Always there has been a quest for truth. Always it has been centered in the Gospel.

Elder Crook grew up in Heber Valley, Utah. "It was a wonderful place to be; beautiful, picturesque and a fine farm community. Grandfather was one of the first settlers to live in Heber," he said.

As a boy, Elder Crook went ward teaching with a man named Orson Hicken who impressed him very much. Mr. Hicken had an appreciation for the problems of the young men. He impressed the importance of truth and the Gospel.



"I have tried all my life to follow the example of Orson Hicken," Elder Crook said.

The scouting program appealed to young Royal Crook. When he was 12 years of age, in 1915, he was one of the first Boy Scouts in the Church. Following his mission, he became a Scout Master and has been in scouting most of his life.

Elder Crook was educated in agriculture and became an extension agent. His assignment was to Fallon. The country was not like the mountain valley of his youth and the people were in poor economic conditions. The housing was not good and the farmers were ready to move.

"We set a goal, to keep the land and level it and prepare it for farming, and then build good houses," Elder Crook explained.

He provided the leadership that the farming community needed. His training in agriculture provided a guidance for this little community to grow by.

"There were only 18 members of the Church in the area. Noble Weight built a little building at his own expense to meet in," Elder Crook said.

Now there are two wards in Fallon which are part of the Fallon Stake, organized last Jan. 18 as the 500th stake in the Church.

Elder Crook became the second bishop of the Fallon Stake for nine years, then on the high council of the Reno Stake. He was patriarch of the Reno Stake when it was divided to make the Fallon Stake.

When Elder Crook was 36 years old, his eyesight was stricken so that he



Royal Crook, Fallon, Nev., patriarch, has given service in Church, community despite loss of sight.

could not see well enough to read or to carry on the responsibilities of the extension service.

An eye condition developed, eliminating his direct vision. He could only see from the extreme sides of his normal vision field. There was nothing that could be done about the condition, "so I learned to live with it," he said.

He bought a ranch in the area he had worked so hard to develop. He built a fine home, raised a family and enjoyed success as a rancher.

"With the loss of my vision I had a great yearning to enlarge my understanding. I could not read, but I could listen to the talking books and through them I have read the scriptures many times. I have read the great books of literature and I have read the philosophies of men. From this has come a great quest for truth," Elder Crook said.

His activity on the ranch did not decline with the loss of sight. His service in the Church continued and his awareness for truth became very sharp.

"Understanding the Gospel is the

great light of truth. With all the revealed and discovered truth as part of the Gospel, there is no need to fear," he said.

His training in farm management was put to use when he was invited to visit the Church ranch in Florida and make a report and recommendations.

"It was frightening to receive the responsibility but when the report was complete and delivered to President Henry D. Moyle he said that I had seen a great deal and it was just what they wanted. It was one of the great experiences of my life," he said.

Elder Crook enjoys talking to the youth. "I feel I have a message for the youth; it is a message of truth," he said.

"Most of our accomplishments can come without direct intervention of God so long as we are capable of doing them ourselves, but we must live close to Him and rely on His universal laws. When we need His help He will be near to help us. I know that. I couldn't have done what I have without the help of the Lord," Elder Crook said.